THE JOURNAL

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AN OLD OLD STORY

Much of the latter period of the annual holiday period on Atiu saw the tiny island community riven by controversy. Conflict centred upon the cost of the two lavish local meeting houses opened at Xmas and, in the New Year, an Island Council edict banning entertainments.

What it all amounted to was a power battle as old as the modern CIs.

Who rules local affairs ?

In a single issue special, the JOURNAL analyses local government power.

INSIDE

WHERE HAVE ALL THE POWERS GONE?

Elder statesman; M.P.; Island Councillor; entrepreneur; public servant.....just who exercises the ultimate power in local affairs in the Cook Islands ? The Uiariki ? Or, hidden forces over which none of them, and none of us hold control. In a journalistic first for the CIs., the JOURNAL investigates an issue which goes to the heart of life as a Cook Islander. Who rules ? And, more to the point, who ought to rule ?

UNSOLICITED COMMENTS ON THE JOURNAL

"No publication has ever offered such an informed picture of our society..." - Rarotonga Businessman

"The best articles I have ever read on CIs. affairs..." - Senior Cook Is. Public Servant

THE JOURNAL

P.O. ATIU, Cook Islands

"Get to know the REAL Cook Islands"

a national publication.

The JOURNAL is a weekly review of the Cook Islands and the world from a Cook Islands and Pacific Regional standpoint.

All views expressed are totally independent and are representative of no one political party or faction.

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— POLITICS —

For the first time we devote almost the whole of one edition to a single issue. The manipulation and exercise of local government power in the Cook Islands is the single most influential factor affecting our lives. Recent claims, therefore, of alleged misuse of power by local officials is felt sufficiently serious for us to take a long, deep look at the incidents reported and at the whole issue of local government. We acknowledge the work of R. Dixon & J. Marurai; N. Lewis; the CI Parliamentary Handbook Compilers; USP Extension Centre Library; W. Gill and Richard Gilson (CIs. 1820-1950 available at the USP Centre Rarotonga) and, inevitably, Prof. Ron Crocombe in compiling a history and analysis. The facts are theirs, the conclusions all our own responsibility.

— VERA —

A trip to Wombledon

Editorial

Asking the Citizen-in-the-Street about the new Local Government Act, or rather the amendments which were passed in the November/December session of Parliament seems to produce one of two responses.

A majority has replied to our question, "What Act ?".

The few who realise that something was going on in Parliament which affected Local Government have answered, "Oh yes...we're supposed to call the Chairman of the Island Council the "Mayor" now, aren't we ?"

The general state of ignorance regarding the operation and even the basic structure of Local Government is alarming.

Central and Local Government's failure to get their message across to the people in a way that will bring them support and understanding from the people is their own fault.

There is no cause for rejoicing in this situation.

Ir the case of Local Government, major unrest is being created among the people by their own and their leaders ignorance about the role, duties, powers and limitations of Island Councils.

Island Councils are all too often the tools of politicians, aid agencies and unscrupulous local power seekers.

They, and the people they represent, are also frequently the victims of ignorance on the part of those who attack them.

Local power structures traditionally in the Cook Islands protect the people. They are not agents of oppression.

The recent confrontation between the Island Council and so-called "liberal" forces on Atiu was characterised by ignorance of the historical roots of CIs. power structures.

In such a climate, good people on both sides brought the people not protection and enlightenment, but the confusion and fear which is the very oppression traditional "local government" is expected to resolve.

POLITICS

COVER STORY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Atiuan teenage students - obedient, shy, hard-working, eager to please and (like all our Outer Islands students) giving every outward indication of being utterly "crushed" by their leaders. True ? Or is there more to it than appearances ? SEE BELOW.

THOU SHALT NOT

TIA

And the forces of the Great Council didst descend upon the Office of the Post.

And the leader of the Council Host didst summon forth an tablet of black from within the Tabernacle of the Police wherein dwelleth the Sergeant.

And upon the tablet he did inscribe a commandment thus:

"Thou shalt hold no other dance but that which is decreed by the Council of the Elders and thou shalt humble thyself before the Lord thy Chairman until such time as He decreeth that the season of ye Rushing Mighty Winds hath passed."

And great was the wretchedness of the people thereupon.

And deep was ye despair of the people of the tribe of Mapu who didst forthwith flee even unto the deepest parts of the makatea where they did erect an unholy Tumunu to Beelzebub.

-vera xi vv 1-5

"No, but Seriously"

COMMENTARY

Any discussion of Local Government, its current problems and its role in contemporary CI politics should have a historical foundation.

Events on Atiu in the past week illustrate that an analysis of local government is long overdue.

The events increased in intensity from what first appeared to be a customary minor squabble and, as the week progressed, began to assume the proportions of a full-scale confrontation between the forces of "liberalism" and those of the allied Island Council/CICC church "conservatives".

On the sidelines, observing, occasionally commenting but generally hoping to be left out of an escalating local crisis, were the dozens of NZ-based Atiuan tere party members over for the opening of the two dramatic meeting houses now dominating the villages of Mapumai and Teenui.

It was rumblings among "liberals" (both Atiuan and non-Atiuan) about the cost of such monuments that initially created the atmosphere of unrest that clouded Christmas 1987 for some Atiuans.

The two buildings can be seen elsewhere in this issue of the JOURNAL

Even reduced and in black and white, they are self-evidentally impressive (especially the two-storey Mapumai Meeting House).

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GOOD GOD

Before undertaking our commentary upon issues arising at a time when a new Local Government Bill has just passed through Parliament, we shall endeavour to fill in that background.

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The cost, as in all local accounting reports, is not easy to pin down.

Speeches made by leaders at the two ceremonies offered a sum of $300,000 spent in building the two houses.

Travel

Add to that a guesstimate of $150,000 spent on NZ tere party travel costs and a further evaluation of $100,000 worth of food, fuel and drink to cater for them; $30,000 worth of gifts and donations during the month and the incalculable cost of the public services (especially power) needed to cope with the massive series of celebrations.. ..and a conservative total basic expenditure sum adds up to well over half a million - dollars.

Adding in everything spent on Atiu over the month, (in addition to a normal Xmas beanfeast) one estimate given us offers a round $1m.!!!

"Liberal" concern

Calculations about the exact cost, though, are not particularly useful. What is without question is that "gigantic zillions of bucks" were spent by an island of 1000 people who claim underdeveloped world status and who these days have an unenviable reputation around the country as being among the least productive recipients of handouts since the days when the Maukeans used to ring up Pui when they ran out of gin and Rothmans!

The return for the investment was threefold:

The total investment by Atiu was calculated by a local builder adding in normal labour costs and the value of free food given by the people as in the region of $2m in overseas terms!

(The cost of the Mini-Games infrastructure!)

The return was wholly either symbolic or spiritual.

Back

Atiu got back:

*Two very expensive monuments to God.

(It was admitted to us that the Meeting Houses will serve limited, virtually nil, purpose as social centres, hostels, food kitchens, youth clubs etc in the traditional sense of the European-style "village hall". They are religious edifices under the control of CICC)

*Enormous per-family costs.

(All admit that life for several months will be very hard financially and, locally, a higher level of remittance from overseas will be needed to cope with commitments. Local food stocks will be low for some time. Many NZers reported to us that expenses had been so big that they had had to send for more money to survive until returning!)

*Significant and rising social discontent among the young, the less well-off, the non-privileged and some NZers regarding the continuing demands that they "bankroll" local families.

Several concerned Atiuan groups came to our attention:

*Rarotonga-based Atiuans who had expressed concern prior to the Opening of the Meeting Houses during the preceeding months.

*NZ-based Atiuans concerned that locally-based leaders may not realise the extent to which demands upon NZ money is hurting the overseas families.

*Local "liberals" outside the Atiuan power structure (workers, non-deacons, youth, tumunu goers etc)

*Non-Atiuan and immigrant individuals for whom the expense cut across personal developmental, spiritual or simple accounting and cost-efficiency values.

Against them appeared to be ranged:

*CICC (including deacons, though not necessarily all of them, and Island Councillors of that church.

*Other Atiuans in high leadership roles.

*Most women.

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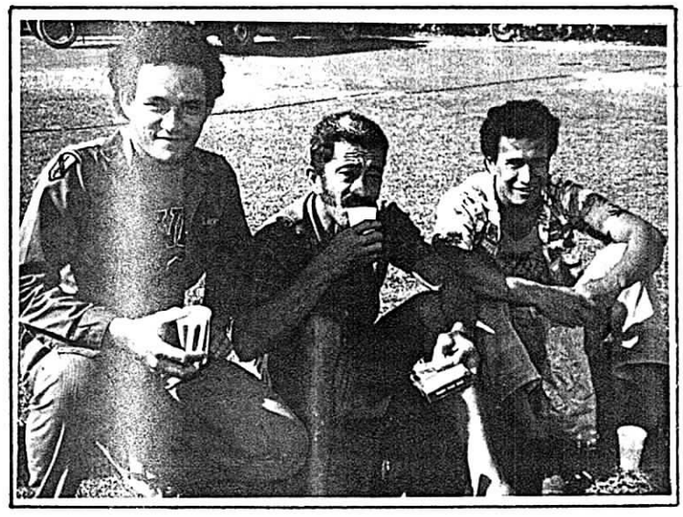

If you want to know public opinion on Atiu, it is often said, go and attend one of the local drinking schools! "That's right," say the gatherings of local men, young and old, as ABOVE, "this is where you'll hear the voice of Atiu!"

"Nonsense!" say most of the island leaders we have spoken to. "If you go to the drinking schools, you'll hear the drink talking. You'll hear all sorts of things the men would never dream of suggesting when they are sober!"

What, however, is concerning middle-of-the-road Atiuans is the polarisation of Atiuan leadership into the self-styled "free thinkers" at the drinking schools and the authoritarian and teetotal CICC Deacons.

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Claims were made to us that the main dissidents were locally based anti-government elements eager to seize on any issue calculated to cause unrest and divide the people.

Coalition

Whilst not being able to analyse so vague a claim, we are inclined to discount any "conspiracy theory" which could involve a coalition of church leaders, tumunu drinkers, white businessmen, public servants, Maori businessmen, and Rarotongan and NZ-based Atiuans!

If, indeed, such a coalition does exist, government really has cause to worry!

As it turned out, it was an old and respected Atiuan leader, Ombudsman Papa Tangata Simiona, who dispelled early disenchantment with the actions of local leaders.

As reported to the JOURNAL, he addressed the issue at the opening of the first of the Meeting Houses in Teenui.

He is said to have admitted that questions had been raised as to the wisdom of spending so much on meeting houses when there remained enormous areas of development still to be tackled in the social sphere.

"Papa Ta gave the perfect unanswerable reply," a disenchanted "rebel" told us, " he said...'God's things come first!', so how can anyone challenge THAT argument," our source added bitterly.

Command

The reply certainly influenced people.

Dissension did not rear its head until the New Year when the people surfaced on clouds of Stein.

It was then that Papa Teiotu Tangatapoto, Chairman of the Island Council and staunchest of the staunch in terms of CICC power, took command.

There suddenly appeared upon the community notice board outside the Post Office, a chalked decree a la Rabuka!

It stated that, "as head of Local Government", he was cancelling all public dances for the duration "of the season".

No explanation was given.

Word soon flashed around the community that "public dances" meant all forms of entertainment and that "the season" was intended to last until March.

The decree was met with widespread accusations of "dictatorship" "undemocratic rule" and, most serious of all, one church (CICC) usurping the functions of the secular Local Government.

The suspicion that this latter was indeed the case was strengthened when questioning of Island Councillors appeared to reveal that the decree did not result from a formal Island Council meeting and was not minuted as such.

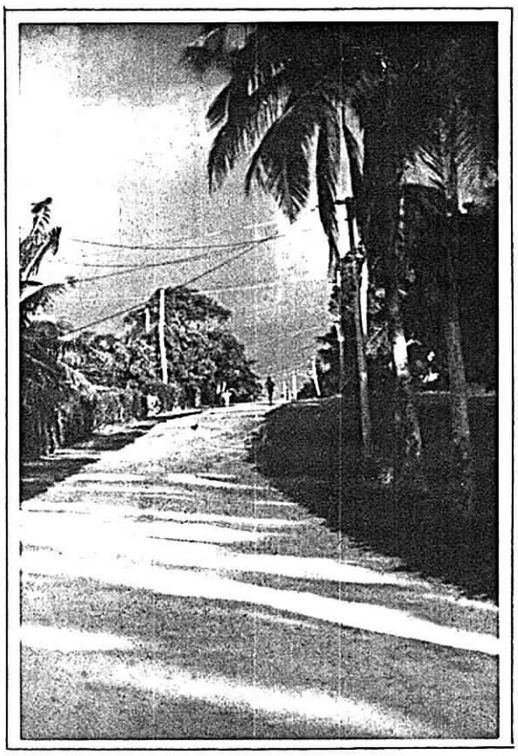
The wrath of some was further increased by suggestions from informed local sources that the Island Council habitually functions in this manner and rarely are decisions backed by meetings or minutes (the accusation, we believe, contains some substance).

What followed was a most unpleasant week in Atiu's political development.

During the course of one meeting which ensued the question was put, "just who rules Atiu ?"

Said some, "the law"; said others, "custom"; said most "we don't know".

That meeting was one of many, both formal and informal which ensued in a week of mounting defiance by groups not prepared to accept.....WHO?



The Atiu of dreams, mythology and tourism.....quiet, peaceful, unspoiled and untroubled. The New Year brought to the surface the Atiu the island's residents live in...a place like anywhere else, full of conflict, contradiction and an unremitting struggle for ascendancy by local power groups.

Dilemma

THAT was the question. If there was defiance, then to whom was it directed ? CICC, to which one may not have been a member? The Island Council, which may or may not have issued the decree? Atiu custom, which no one seemed to be able to define or even have the authority to define?

In the atmosphere of widespread confusion which on so many occasions has characterised Atiuan public life in modern times, according to many Atiuan observers, animosity heightened.

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Events were planned with a view to inviting any authority to stop them.

The Police were referred to.

The Rarotonga Police were rung up.

Threats of lawyers being brought were made.

At the height of the storm, the two sides were represented by some of the most widely respected members of the Atiuan community at loggerheads with each other as to whether a church custom should be upheld or a charity function for the destitute should go ahead!

On two occasions, the two most forthright (and bravest) for their beliefs, Papa Tu and Mr. Roger Malcolm, were witnessed in public confrontation.

Hatchet

Behind them ranged the distantly vocal forces they had lined up behind them.

Both stood for principle.

Both, fortunately, appeared to (reluctantly) accept a tenuous compromise.

Maybe, it was the arrival on the streets of the JOURNAL bearing the Queen's Message asking that people should "have the humility to accept that, while we each have a right to our own convictions, others have a right to theirs, too."!

Whatever, the cause, an uneasy current peace reigns over Atiu in the area of Local Government.

Hatchets have been buried but no one is quite sure how thin is the layer of Atiuan soil under which they lie!

A Christian Tradition

As any sound structuralist will note, the various crises and confrontations which occurred in the first week of the brand new year on Atiu are the result of contradictions within the "system". The contradictions themselves can be traced historically and can thus form the basis of what may be a way of resolving them in the future. The history of Atiu is the history of all islands in our country, give or take a few personality differences. And it all amounts to.....

A MATTER OF TAKE AND GIVE

In so far as as our local power structure is shot full of contradictions, Local Government in the Cook Islands has much in common with local government everywhere in the emergent nation world.

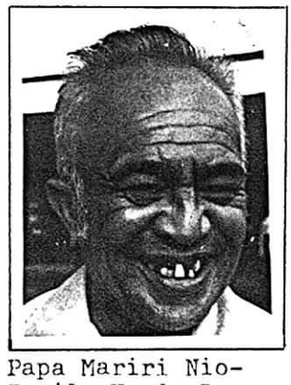
We have emerged out of British traditions, like all Anglo-Saxon ex-colonies.

But we haven't, like the British themselves, had a couple of thousand years to polish and refine them to meet local demands.

What lay before the arrival of the British administration is sketchily recorded and barely understood. Vast areas of the nation's history are dubious at best and self-interested lies at worst.

Hence our history of government and politics amounts to a foreign mess superimposed upon a local mess.

What we have is not the resolution of historical conflict over many centuries.



Papa Mariri Nio-Family Head, Deacon, and Deputy Chairman of the Atiu Island Council.
-The JOURNAL argues that he, and other much criticised conservative leaders may, in fact, be the real "liberals" in local government!

It is one ad hoc structure slotted into the next.

The result is that we tend to operate within several structures at the same time.

We choose the one to operate within according to its suitability to manipulate any given situation so that the outcome is most favourable to us.

So, the same person is often noticed protesting that one given course of action is "undemocratic", the next is "not traditional" and a third is "not according to custom".

That same person may face three different situations and apply the principles of modern cost accounting to one, passi-

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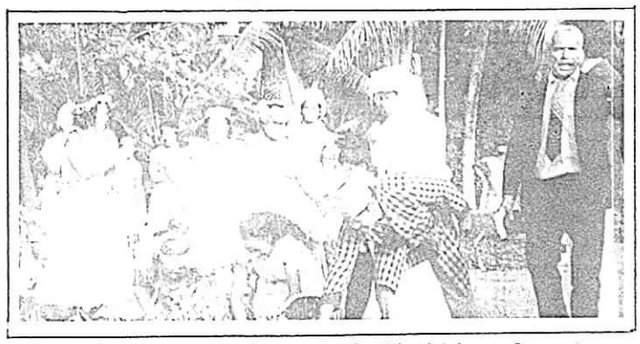

The clearest and most definitive local Cook Islands leadership is often considered to be witnessed during the preparations, rehearsals and performance of the "nukus" performed at religious festivals. The direction of these bible tales involves a totality of Maori leadership skills.

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onate democratic humanitarianism to another, and Baptist fundamentalism to the final one.

To the Western liberal, it is bewildering. He often resolves his bewilderment by accusing the operators of local power structures (e.g. Island Councils or deacons) as "hypocritical".

They in their turn are not so much bewildered (they know what it is all about) as frustrated. Often, they are called upon to explain in English and always they are convinced that the foreign liberal will never understand anyway.

With increasing numbers of Cook Islanders adopting the rhetorical language of the foreign liberal (either through education, or overseas contact, or as a convenient political stance), the pattern of confrontation witnessed on many islands in the Southern Group is likely to increase.

Historically, local government in the Cook Islands has been fashioned by two broad foreign influences - the capitalist liberal/trader/NZ Administrator and the colonial conservative/missionary/aid donor/British administrator/modern politician.

At the risk of oversimplification, all CIs. politics, the policies and personalities involved in CIs. politics and the manner in which CIs. politics is conducted, falls into one or the other of these two camps.

There is no lasting marxist/socialist/trade union/worker tradition.

The pre-contact past threads its way through both camps, being interpreted and adapted according to whatever use the personalities wish to make of it.

Misadventures

To understand confrontation in CIs. local government you work at the interface where the capitalist liberal camp brings its set of precepts into conflict with those of the colonial conservative.

An examination of episodes in CIs. history will reveal that the former have the appearance of "giving" a great deal to the people (democracy, fairness, competition, rewards on merit, new systems etc) and end up "taking" far more than they have "given".

A close examination of other relevant episodes will reveal that the latter have the appearance of "taking" a great deal from the people (figuratively and literally) and end up "giving" to the people far more than they are remotely capable of "taking".

To illustrate this assertion, an important episode in the history of the most "unliberated" Southern Group Island, in terms of capitalist penetration, is revealing.

Many of the misadventures which dot the history of local government in most of our islands have not befallen Mangaia.

Similarly, many of the so-called benefits of liberalising capitalism have not occurred, either.

But, the history of Mangaia at the time of NZ annexation in the first decade of this century offers valuable lessons about local government, the role of the church and the inevitable contradictions (and ensuing conflict) that arise when liberal capitalism meets conservative colonialism.

The story is taken from contemporary letters and documents stored in the National Museum.

It was researched and put together by a group of Mangaian historians supervis-

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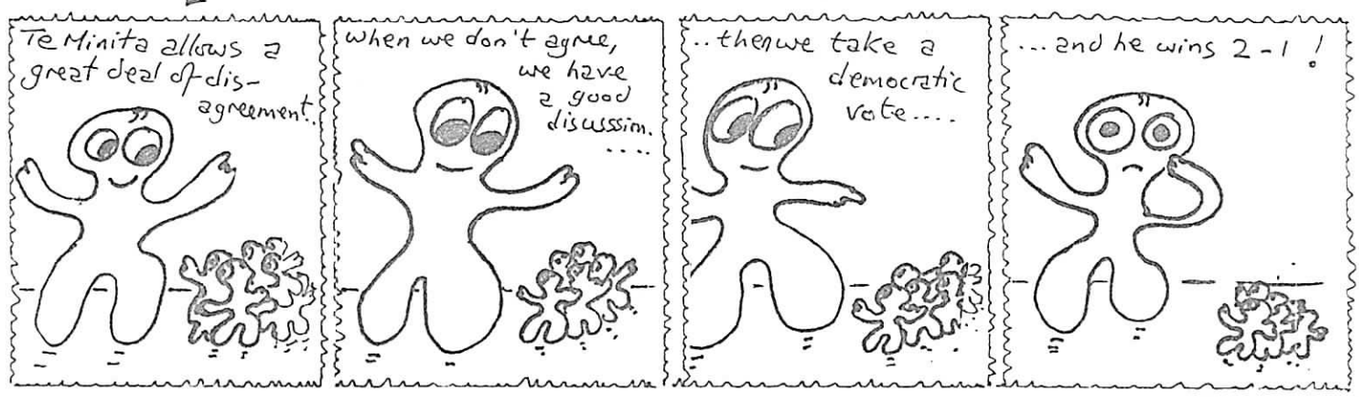
the quorums (AN EVERYDAY TALE OF POLITICAL FOLK) tropo


Te Minita allows a great deal of dis- agreement.
when we don't agree, we have a good discussion. ...
..then we take a democratic vote....
...and he wins 2-1!

COMMENTARY

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ed by former Mangaia based economist Rod Lixon, now working with Aboriginal Affairs in Australia.

The personalities involved are recognisable throughout post-contact CIs. history - traditional leaders, church officials, colonial administrators, and the recurring tragicomic figure of the liberal capitalist.

ELDERS IN ACTION

Island Councils have always had a somewhat dubious constitutional standing.

Even the process of election formed the basis of a successful appeal late last year in a disputed Mangaian case.

Like many of the lasting problems still affecting the lives of the people, the vague terms of reference by which Island Councils opeerate and the wide licence members often assume when they set about interpreting duties and powers, difficulties over local government can be traced back to the curious (some prefer "appalling") figure of Lt. Col Gudgeon.

Gudgeon was the last of the British Residents and first of the Resident Commissioners appointed by NZ after annexation in 1901.

He was given executive responsibility and proceeded to organise the natives as he saw best until 1909 with very little reference to Wellington.

Island Councils "sort of" existed prior to 1901 and those that operated were recognised in the 1901 Act.

Their terms of referenceinitially appeared to be basically their own decision provided Gudgeon agreedduring his infrequent Outer Islands visits

What were, however, far more important to the people were the "ariki courts".

These were NOT recognised per se in the Act.

They had been the cornerstone of British colonial life in the Outer Islands.

Simply put, the British followed a policy of leaving the Islands to their own devices and those of the missionaries...once a few basic re-organisations to the traditional chiefly system had been worked out.

They supported the chiefs, provided the chiefs kept a Union Jack handy for ceremonial occasions.

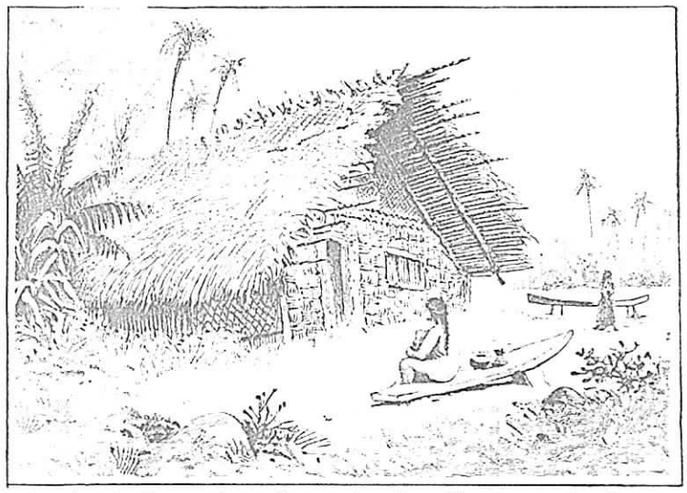
The vehicle of control, supported by both the missionaries and the colonial power was the ariki court....on Mangaia, the still operating "aronga mana".

The ariki court had worked closely with the missionaries of the LMS and CICC.

Christianity and politics and the law were inextricably linked. High office, as today, was dependent upon church membership. The chiefs and their supporters filled public positions.

The most important positions were those of magistrate and court officials.

The court controlled licensing, trade, custom, behaviour,



Ancient Mangaia. Mangaia is the one S. Group Island which has retained its early 19th. Century power structure virtually intact, an achievement reached after violent confrontation on Mangaia with NZ colonial authorities.

the ra'ui, immigration, settlement and the land.

This was what we have referred to as the "conservative colonial tradition".

It took away the people's personal freedom.

But, in return, it offered protection.

It denied the people's individual freedom to negotiate their own destiny (by peaceful or violent means) and it gave back to the people in return massive collective security.

In 1904 Gudgeon embarked upon a programme designed to break the whole chiefly system based upon the ariki courts.

These and the chiefs were regarded as despotic, dictatorial and cruel.

He re-constituted the Island Councils under their Resident Agent.

He and his Resident Agents claimed the support of the people for these moves.

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Open to all

AML

AFTER WORK
WEEK-ENDS
TONIGHT

WELCOME

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In reality, modern historians interpret the move in the light of New Zealand's known objectives for the economic management of the Cook Is.

Economic development by small entrepreneurs was to replace the despotic power of the chiefs.

Too poor to run fully-fledged "colonies", NZ required its overseas possessions to develop a high degree of self-sufficiency.

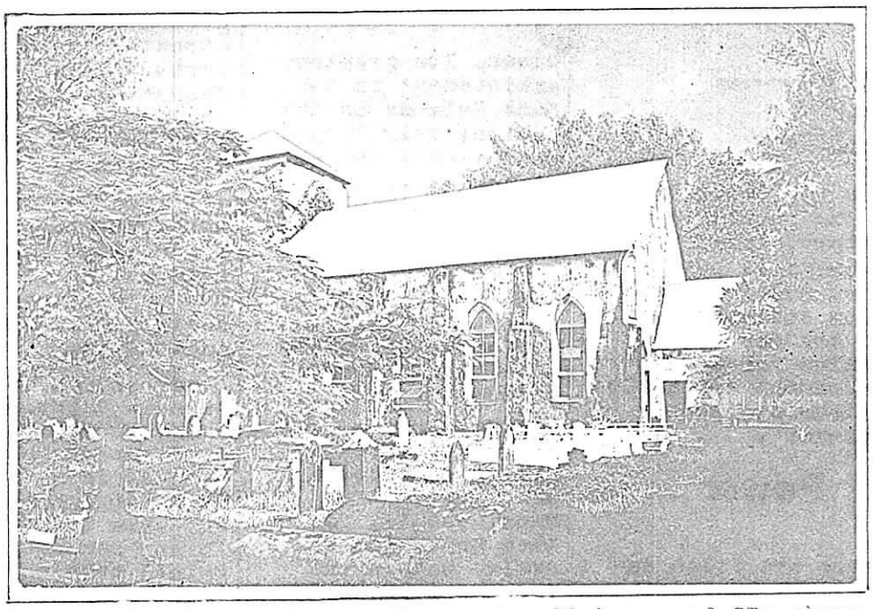
The drive was to encourage a level of petty entrepreneurship among the natives. This achieved, there would ensue considerable local commitment to capitalist principles of trade and management which would be of benefit to the mother country.

The ariki courts, despotic, and non-democratic, (as they were judged) appeared to stand in the way of this programme, being opposed in structure to private land ownership and private enterprise.

On most islands, Gudgeon formally did away with the ariki courts, replacing them with the ancestor of our modern Island Councils.

On Mangaia, however, the Resident Agent, Major Large met with violent opposition from John Trego and the chiefs of the Aronga Mana.

They made his life a constant misery by a widespread campaign of civil disobedience and threatened to burn down the proposed new government cargo shed. Eventually they seized and occupied the court house and, according to Large's letters, "bloodshed" was imminent.



Avarua CICC in Rarotonga, the most well-known of CIs churches and generally considered perhaps the most enlightened.

Large was a good, kind and well-meaning liberal, what we have described as the "liberal capitalist" element in Cook Islands affairs.

He gave the people individual freedom, the chance to be appointed on merit, rid themselves of their "despotic" chiefs and become democratic entrepreneurs in the accepted NZ tradition.

What he threatened to take away was only recognised by the aronga mana in its full implications. What the people were about to lose was their collective security. They were about to be conquered and as John Trego declared at the time "Mangaians have only been conquered by the word of Jesus Christ."

The cornerstones of that collective security were the church, the ariki court and the land titles.

Mangaia has resolutely retained that collective security and, apart from regular interference by national politicians, has managed to maintain a clear division of responsibility among the various elements of local government...the Aronga Mana, the Island Council, the Church and the Central Government agencies.

Unlike Rarotonga and Atiu, there is always a clear answer on Mangaia to the question, "who rules?".

Comment

We have covered the story of Atiu's New Year confrontation between rival social groups in considerable detail including (above) a survey of the bare historical background.

We have done this because we see the "set-to" as having major implications for the future of local government on Atiu and considerable interest for the CIs. as a whole.

Local Government is far more immediate and possibly therefore more important for the people than Central Government.

As such, any detected sign that its structure is under seige, or may be in the process of change demands investigation and analysis.

At present, throughout the Cook Islands the people are encouraged to believe that it is through small-time entrepreneurism that their road to individual and national collective survival lies.

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For the first time in the country's history, this encouragement is being given not just by white entrepreneurs and traders but by massive forces of government and their various aid agency "yes-men".

Power

There are false assumptions behind that encouragement.

A glance at Rarotonga today reveals the falsity.

Separation from and eventual dispossesion of land; exploitive worker/ employer relationships if these situations do not already exist, at least there potential is fully visible. Added to them are enforced labour mobility first from the O.Is and then onwards from Rarotonga; very severe social problems emerging; marginalisation of the working class Maori and his alienation from his own society. All this is taking place and is the result of the erosion and destruction of conservative values and replacement by capitalist values.

It would be, we feel, unprofitable to argue a case for liberal capitalism being able to offer success to anyone other than those individuals who succeed! That is the nature of capitalism, as is its built-in class polarisation.

It would be equally unprofitable to argue a case for conservative colonialism assisting the growth of a lively democratic entrepreneural class. Its greatest achievement in the Cook Islands is the collectively secure land tenure system of Mangaia...which virtually precludes entrepreneurism in modern terms.

The process by which liberal capitalism erodes conservative power structures is insidious.

It dismantles a structure which offers collective security to the Maori people, denies them the right to evolve within the framework of their own experience and ends up producing the unique phenomenon of a "land-owning proletariat"!

It offers an industrial revolution complete with urban drift, agrarian collapse, exploitation of cheap labour, "fat cat" bosses; liberal reformers; religious revivalists; displacement of families; child labour; institutionalised sexism and the whole works...

Rarotonga, for those who care to look closely, has all the trappings of post industrial 19th Century Britain, including the equivalent of the "gin palaces" and many a would-be Lord Shaftesbury do-gooding and bellyaching that this was not the way it really should have been if the capitalists had been a bit nicer!

Class

As may be noted in our brief history (above), it is a process that is at least 83 years old.

It offers "democratic" solutions to what since Gudgeon onwards have been deemed the despotism of the ruling classes.

It moves towards a dismantling of the structure which supports the supposed despotism, in the CIs. the church, the chiefly system, strict land tenure.

It thus achieves, as in Rarotonga, the climate for the alternative it seeks- the penetration of society by Western capitalism.

And, as can be seen in Rarotonga, every successful survivor of the process is matched by a large number who have lost all former security and gained nothing in return except a new status as dispossessed worker.

The early stages are extremely well-meaning.

The situation in Atiu is such as to invite dismantlement.

Undoubtedly, the Island Council and their Chairman are frequently guilty (in terms of their powers as Island Councillors) of significant abuses of power, according to the values of their opponents.

Undoubtedly, according to these same opponents, they are also involved in serious cases of potential conflict of interest in terms of their relationships with CICC, at least one local business, the national MP's and the many visiting aid groups.

Undoubtedly, according to their opponents, they allow themselves to become tools of other vested interests.

Equally undoubtedly, they regard their opponents as troublemakers, people with no understanding of Atiuan values (even if they are Atiuan) and motivated by similarly suspicious vested interests.

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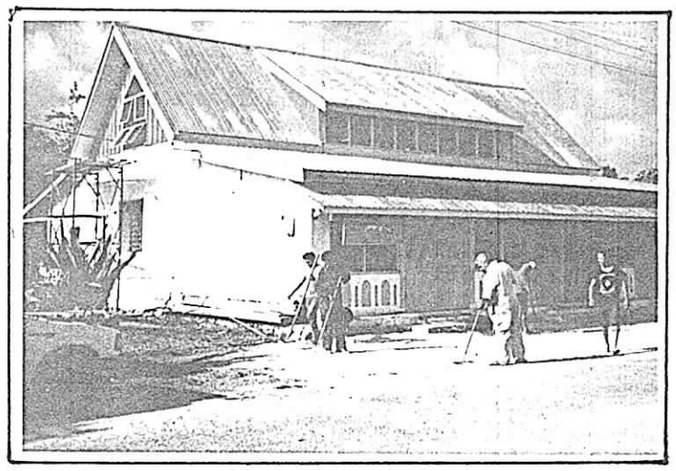

The superb new $40-50,000 Teenui Meeting House in Atiu opened just before Xmas. Like its two-storey "twin" just down the road in Mapumai, it became the focus not only of admiration from some quarters but also of controversy. Undercurrents of discontent flowed through both villages at times and accusations ranged from gross waste (the two meeting houses could indeed have paid for a fine, permanent hospital) to hypocrisy (we are after all an aid recipient nation demanding that others pay our way because we are so poor!), dictatorial attitudes by leaders, undemocratic decision making and "informal accounting".

COMMENTARY

from previous page

And, undoubtedly, they and their opponents are men of honour by their own lights and by most members of the community.

They regard themselves as men acting in the best interests of the community as a whole and as trustees of the island of their birth and heritage.

Their opponents regard themselves as enlightened men and women with the best interests of individual Atiuans and even the long term future of the island at heart.

We are thus faced again with the confrontation of liberal capitalism and and colonial conservatism.

It is the choice between two oppressions and the middle-of-the-road Atiuan we have spoken to appears to sense this.

Together

Therein lie the contradictions.

The acceptance of chiefly rule is not in question. It is WHAT KIND of chiefly rule that is in doubt...and the Island Council are open to question if they try to impose chiefly rule without chiefly authority.

The acceptance of Christianity is not in question. It is WHAT KIND of Christianity that is in doubt...and the CICC are open to question if they attempt to impose their will on non-members as well as appearing to often lamentably fail in basic christian norms of tolerance, humilty and charity.

But, Papa Teiotu 's instincts are correct. The people's collective security DOES lie in the ariki court.

And Papa Tu is in an impossible situation. He is required to be all things to all men at all times.

Alone, and at the cost of enormous criticism directed at his person, he is maintaining the authority vested 100 years ago in ariki courts.

But, the ariki court no longer exists.

Nothing exists on Atiu - just a mish-mash of half-understood isolated power structures, some responsible to Rarotonga, some responsible to their shareholders, some responsible to foreign agencies. some responsible to family heads, some responsible to the churches etc.

There is no Aronga Mana.

By acting for the non-existant "aronga mana" (and their disappearance from power on Atiu was not an Atiuan decision in essence), Papa Tu is assisting maintain the rule of the Atiuan Maori.

Cunning people will spot that and exploit him for their own ends.

Well-meaning people will offer skills and support to help him achieve that laudable goal.

Those who see him as a despot will, like Col. Gudgeon, hasten his removal.

The power vacuum left by Vainerere Tangatapoto on Atiu is considerable.

It leaves us with an island unstructured in terms of decision-making in the broad interests of the people.

It is one of the messes bequeathed us by colonialism.

It will only be cleaned up slowly and carefully if there are men on all sides with wisdom, patience and humility.

Atiuans collective security is in peril.

Its only structural guardian is the Island Council.

The JOURNAL is distinctly lacking in humility and thus is prepared to call upon all men and women of goodwill to work WITH them rather than against them, whatever their presumed errors... ..and is also prepared to rigorously expose those elements on Atiu who seek to manipulate them for personal advantage.

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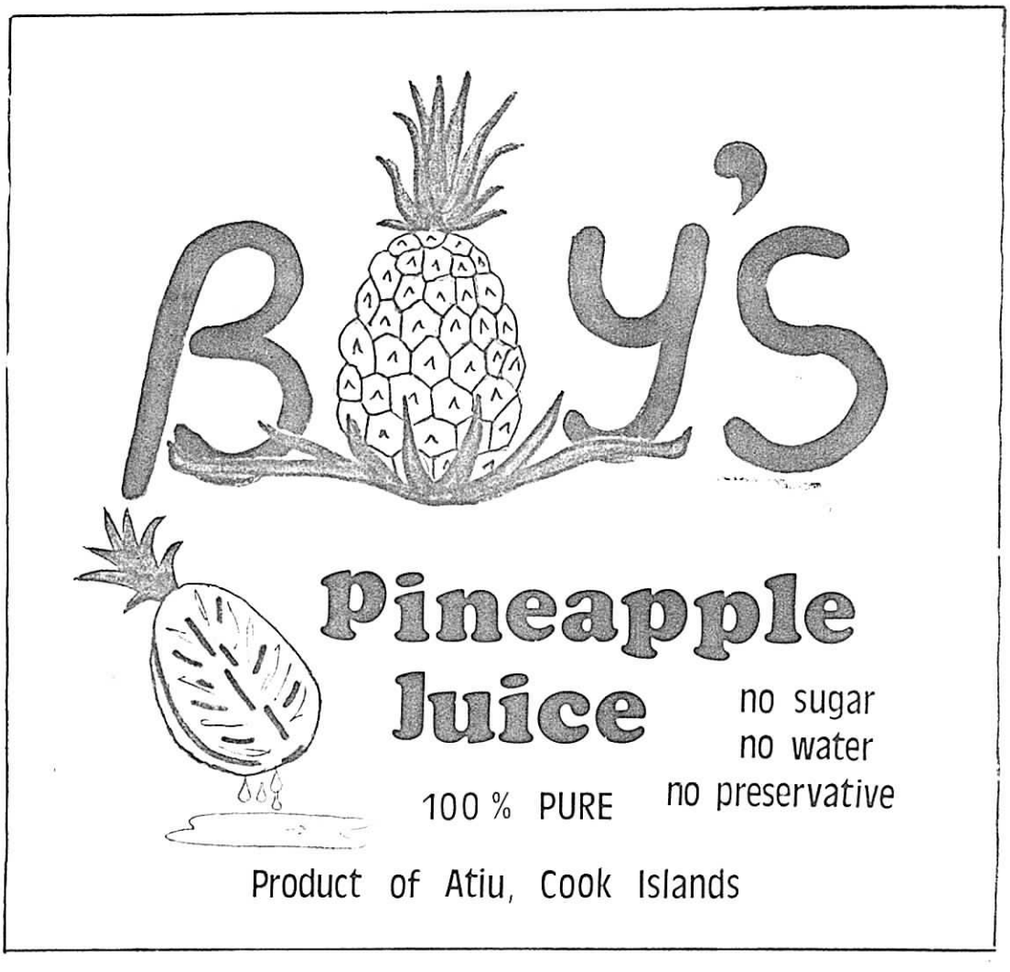

POLITICS

COMMENT

from previous page

At present, we are aware of serious internal conflict on Atiu in the social services, in youth activities, in sport, in the church, in business and in politics.

However, men like Papa Tu and the Island Council are attempting to fill the vacuum. It would be foolish to bemoan the breakdown of social values on Rarotonga and at the same time undermine those who are attempting to conserve Maori values on Atiu.

Unless some overall restoration of "aronga mana" power is re-established by leaders on Atiu, we believe sadly that Atiu may become a rather unpleasant little island upon which to live in the future.

For that reason, it is as well that Papa Tu exists. If he didn't, we would have to invent him!

AUTHORITY IN FIRING LINE

A SUMMARY:

Local Government in the twentieth century has been characterised by central government's attempts to alter the structure of local power tenure so as to bring it under control.

In keeping with its desire to bring about economic change, central governments have endeavoured to impose "democratic" structures upon local situations.

Just as the British colonial power relied upon missionaries and the church to create the climate necessary for the fulfilment of their objectives, so NZ and Self-Governing Powers have used the entrepreneur in a similar role...sometimes without the entrepreneur fully realising his "revolutionary" role.

HISTORY:

*Protectorate:

1891 - Federal Constitution Act (amended 1899) provided for elected District Representatives on Rarotonga every 3 years. In effect the reps were chosen by the chiefs. NB: Chiefs DO NOT stand for elections, indicating that there is a markedly different understanding of "elections" than that understood by proponents of "democracy". Hence contradiction with several modern "committee" practices which subordinate even chiefs to the will of the commoner.

At this time the chiefs of Niue, wishing to be annexed to UK not NZ, refused to obey Federal Council laws and eventually opted out of the Cook Islands

CIs. ACT (Annexation)

1901: C.Is. Act (Annexation by NZ) provided for the appointment of a Resident Commissioner. He superceded Makea as Chief Executive on Rarotonga and was officially responsible to a Minister in NZ. The RC appropriated control of funds and, with his C.Is. RA's the appointment and firing of officials, hitherto the prerogative of chiefs.

The Act recognised Island Councils which existed de facto as ariki courts.

1902: NZ Government opposition unsuccessfully argued for the retention of tribal government. Establishment of Land Titles Court.

Under Gudgeon's idiosyncratic rule, the role of the ariki remained in doubt and seems largely based upon whatever use of them suited Gudgeon's objectives from time to time. (Albert Henry and Tom Davis both pursued the same broad policy!)

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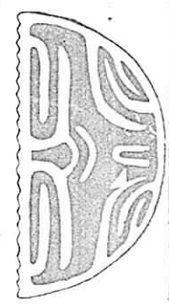
Voice That Will Not Be Stilled

Papa Teiotu Tangatapoto, controversial and outspoken Chairman of the Atiu Island Council (Mayor)

'I A ORANA



TRADITIONAL CREATIVE ARTS ATIU, THE COOK ISLANDS
(PROP. terupe kelly putiare)

terai manea

POLITICS

from previous page

1904: The ariki refused to encourage capitalist agriculture in the manner Gudgeon wished and the ariki courts were abolished. Island Councils were given control of road construction and maintenance and the management of the ra'ui.

1909 Gudgeon retired and administration was almost entirely taken over by the RC and the Minister. Only the authority to pass ordinances approved by the RC was left to the ariki.

Increased centralisation of power meant that the ariki and local authorities were of little importance politically. Many officials saw little purpose for the ariki and sub-chiefs who appeared to be very despotic and did no noticeable work. It was also felt that local government, as it then existed was a British and mission creation and not suited to the development of the people's economic freedom. (A gross misinterpretation according to Mangaian authorities today).

1909-1913 Development of the "taihoa" (slow progress, gradualism) policy under Minister Carroll. This policy was well-meaning and continued through the twenties and thirties. It can now be seen, however, to have neglected institutional change and political awareness.

1915: The Cook Islands Act established an Island Council for Rarotonga and for other islands by order in Council. Their powers were as before with the additional right to levy approved local taxes and spend them under approval. This and the Land Court led to many ariki complaints that they had lost much "mana" and that lack of strong leadership was disrupting community life.

It was for this reason that pragmatic chiefs in the 1920's attempted to re-establish their authority by dominating the Island Councils and other "democratic" committees.

In retaliation, successful local businessmen "firmed up" the democratic procedures governing their activities and committees as a way of resisting chiefly intrusion.

Factionalism thus developed on several islands owing to the loss of chiefly authority over "modern" institutions.

Hence, Island Councils grew to be one of the few institutions in which the chiefs and sub-chiefs could exercise real power. This was one of the reasons why suggestions to seek representation in the NZ Parliament was turned down as chiefs feared a further erosion of power.

PROCLAMATION

RANFURLY

RANFURLY

OI KARANGA

ANNEXATION PROCLAIMED

1946-7: The emergence of the left wing CIPA on Rarotonga politicised Island Councils. The National Legislative Council was formed in 1947 comprising representatives of all Island Councils by election (although most members turned out to be ariki).

1965: Self Government based upon the existing Legislative Assembly but removing Island Council representatives. This established the current domination of local affairs by the elected National MP's.

As can be seen from all the above, the events on Atiu of the first week of January 1988 are part of an old, old story describing a battle which has lasted almost throughout this century.

This does not mean that it is any the less relevant today.

It is a story of massively well-meaning personalities, not of heroes and villains.

The history of 20th century CIs. is not that of princes and kings in the time-honoured European tradition.

It is economic.

The forces lining up in conflict are centralisation versus localisation, liberal capitalism versus enlightened conservatism.

Both sides honestly believe that their way brings greatest benefit to the people.

It is capitalism, (largely the "rugged pioneer" style capitalism of NZ) that motivates one side. It is conservation (of custom, rank, tradition and authority) that motivates the other.

As yet, Cook Islands history has yet to witness the successful emergence of the third force which is the enemy of both - international socialist principles. It came near in 1946. The JOURNAL believes it will inevitably re-emerge as the centrist movement after we have completed the historical course of the alternative extremes and they are seen to be discredited.

The battle will undoubtedly continue with both factions claiming the "people" as they assault the moral high ground.

With this edition of the JOURNAL, we hope that our readers may be able to have something of a clearer insight into a struggle whose outcome will determine what type of CIs. our children and grandchildren inherit.

Lt. Col Gudgeon, rude, arrogant, idiosyncratic, opinionated...and the single most important colonial influence on CIs. affairs this century. Historians are still divided over his record.

14

VERA JOURNAL

THE SATIRICAL WEEKLY OF THE PACIFIC

The Spectator, No. 10, Monday, March 12, 1711

Tuesday Evening January Takutea

SPORT

NEWS OF A HAPPY EVENT

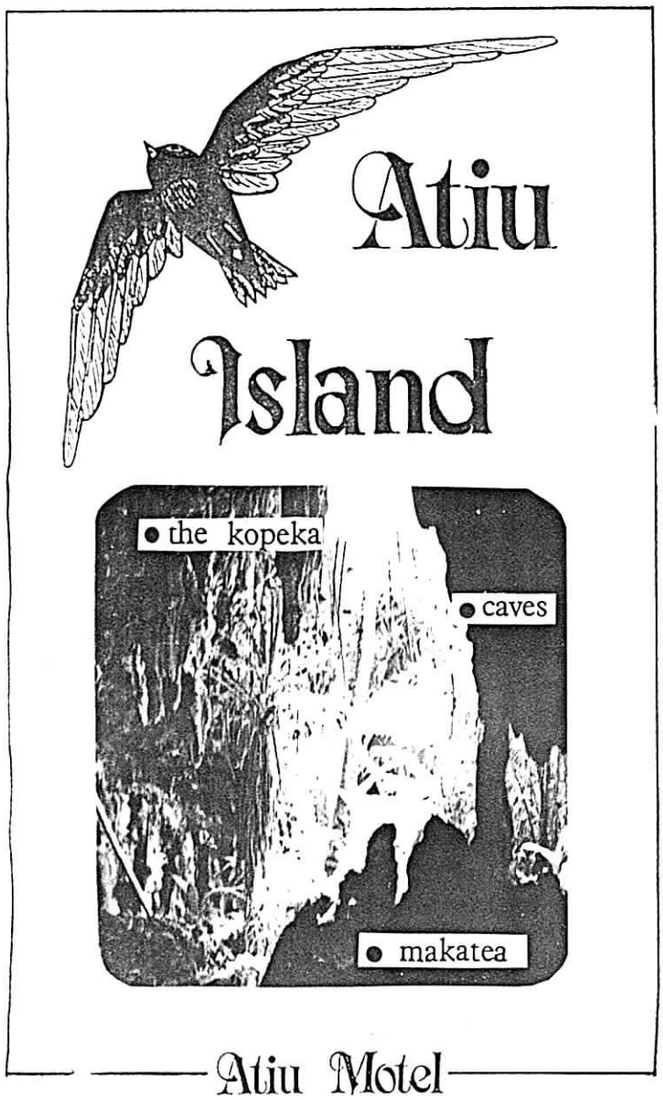
VERA GOES TO WOMBLEDIN 1987

While the rest of the Nation's sportsmen and women were weeping in Noumea last month, the fit, the young and the healthy were assembling in Atiu for the 4th Atiu Motel sponsored Annual Grass Court Championships.

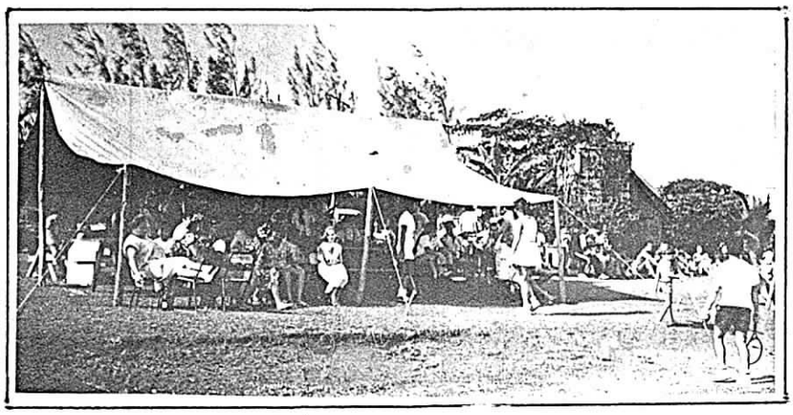
They were joined on Centre Court for the event by a fair proportion, also, of the degenerate, the aging and the dissolute.

(CONTINUED OVER...)

ABOVE RIGHT: Visiting Rarotongan star, President of the CILTA, former national champion and SPG representative, Brian Baudinet, currently ranked No. 2749361874th. in the world on grass and a good day.
BELOW: Eagle-eyed Championship Officials carefully examine chops - a time-honoured ritual going back to the distant origins of the event in the days of grace and elegance 1984.

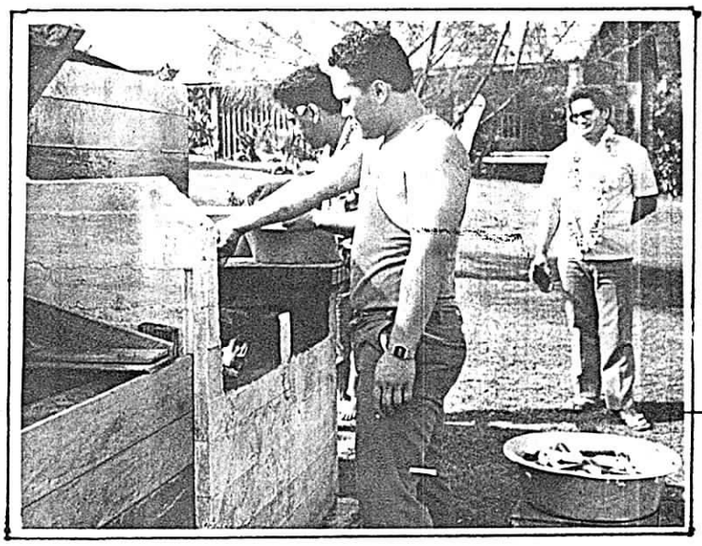


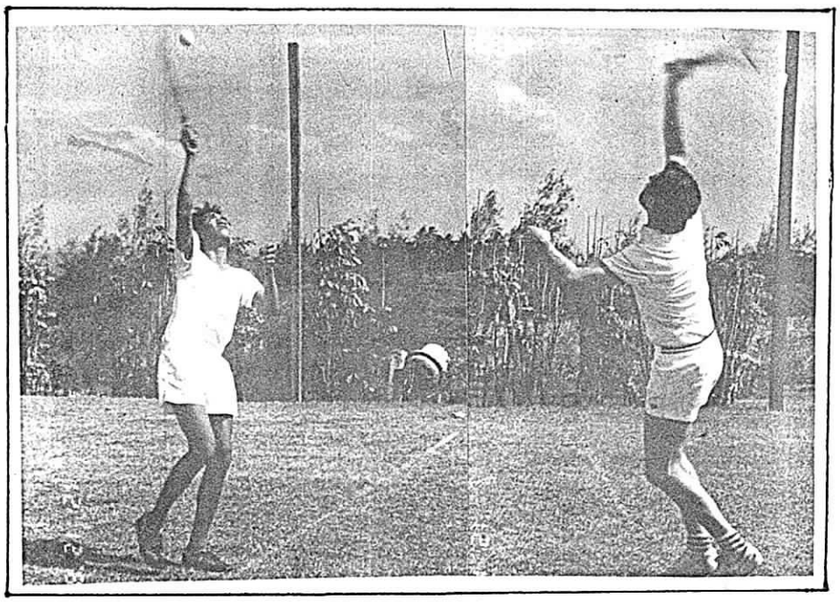
- THE FOURTH ATIU OPEN TENNIS - GRASS CHAMPIONSHIPS -



LEFT: The cream of Atiuan and Takutean aristocracy assembled in the main stand for the Centre Court finals, only genteel calls for the participants to "get stuffed" (a traditional piece of Championships repartee) disturbing the soft clink of the paper cups and the delicate rip of another carton opening on the sunlit sward.
BELOW: Warming up on an outside court supervised by a watchful umpire.

SPONSORED ANNUALLY BY ATIU MOTEL





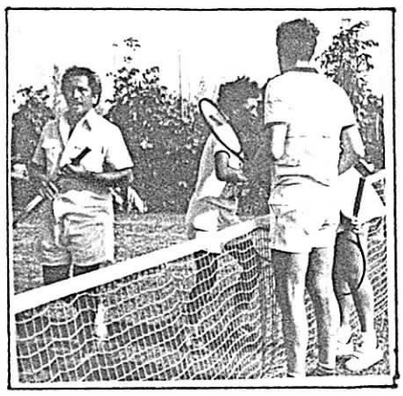
A feature of the nail-biting exhibition final between visiting super star Baudinet (right) and local Atiuan No. 1 Junior Raui (left) was the abandonment of the traditional net in the closing stages as exchanges increased in ferocity.

Not even vocal threats from the visitor to cancel all incoming inter-island flights, suspend credit and blackball future Atiuan applications for CILTA membership could deter the young hopeful who only conceded defeat after the ex-champ was reduced to offering special deals on duty free Hong Kong-pirated Linda Lovegrove re-runs...with damaged 1979 Nike factory specials thrown in at match point.

VERA

TENNIS CHAMP'S

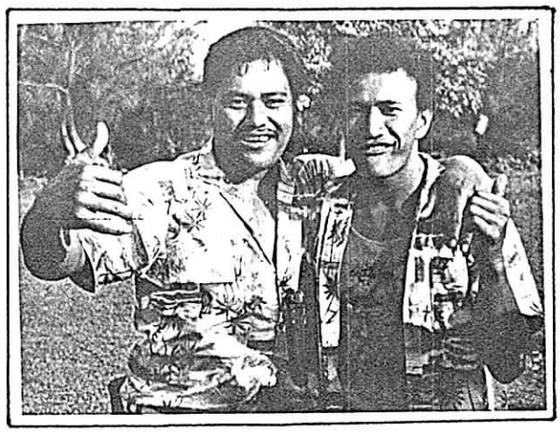
For the packed crowds who annually flock to Wombledin, Atiu 1988 brought the traditional warmth of holiday companionship and many memories to take back on the scooter flight back to the far-flung corners of Atiu from whence they came.



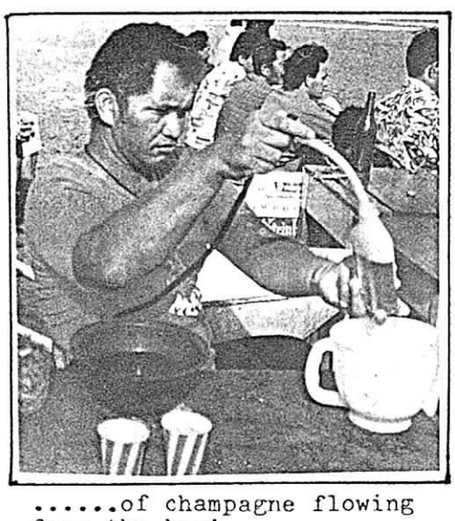
MEMORIES OF.....

....of sunlit days of yesteryear with the reappearance of long-forgotten stars of a dim and distant era. ABOVE: Rising teenage up-and-coming stars with a big future...in 1954!

...dramatic altercations at the net, high level disputed points, walk-off. LEFT: Tokorangi McEnroe storms off to the bar.



....of romping ball boys, ever eager to race to all corners of the court to keep the action flowing (above)....of dedicated national administrators, coaches and officials viewing all the finer points with the eye of experience and drinking in the atmosphere of the great day (left).



.....of champagne flowing from the keg!

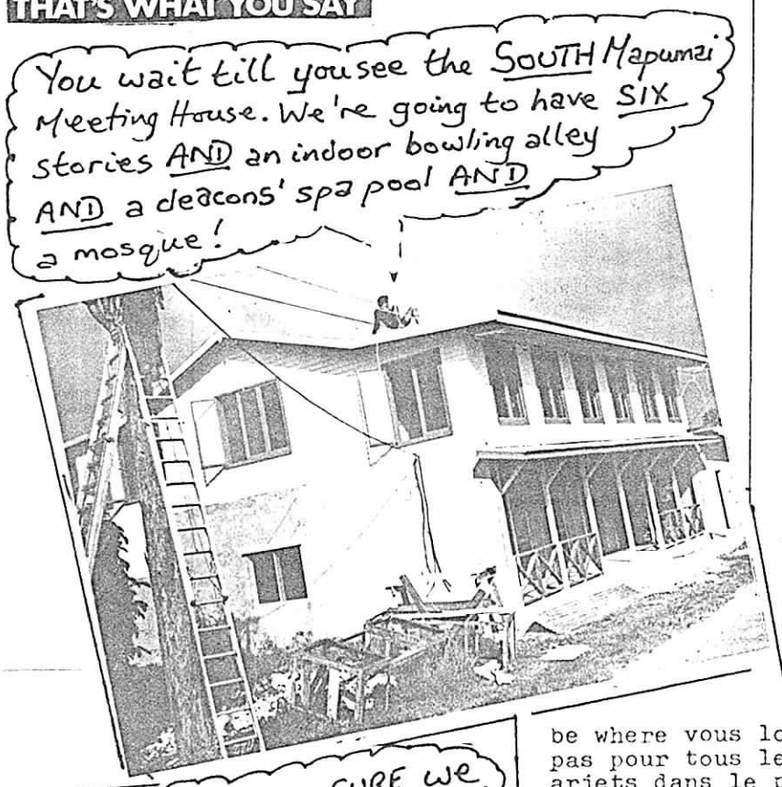
....of strawberries fresh from the umu!

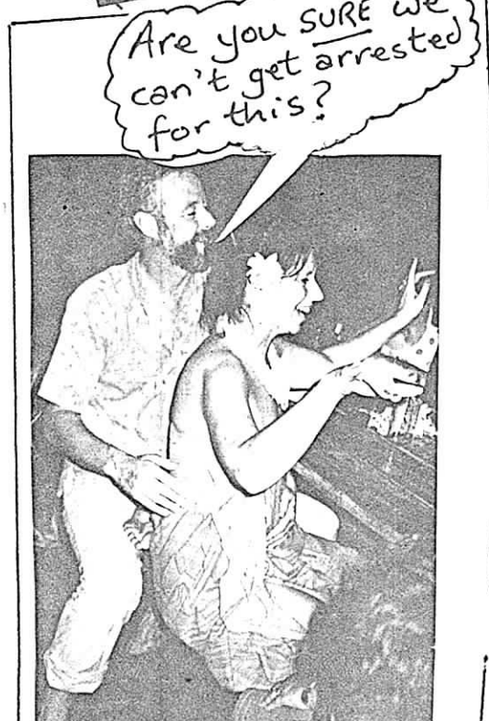
THIS— WAS WOMBLEDIN 1987 'VERA

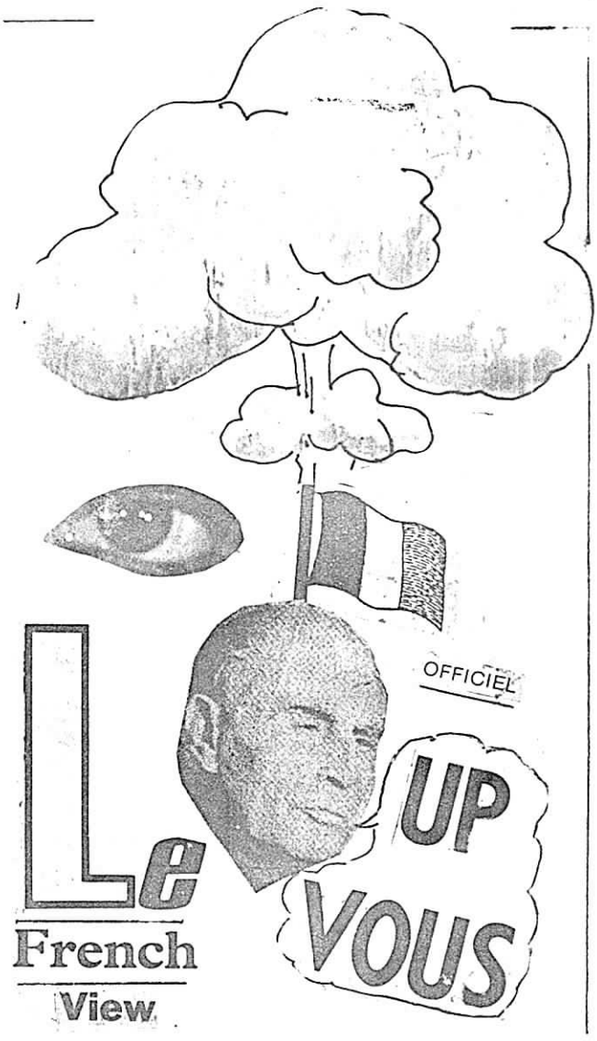
Vera

WORLD WAR 6

THAT'S WHAT YOU SAY


You wait till you see the SOUTH Mapumzi Meeting House. We're going to have SIX stories AND an indoor bowling alley AND a deacons' spa pool AND a mosque!





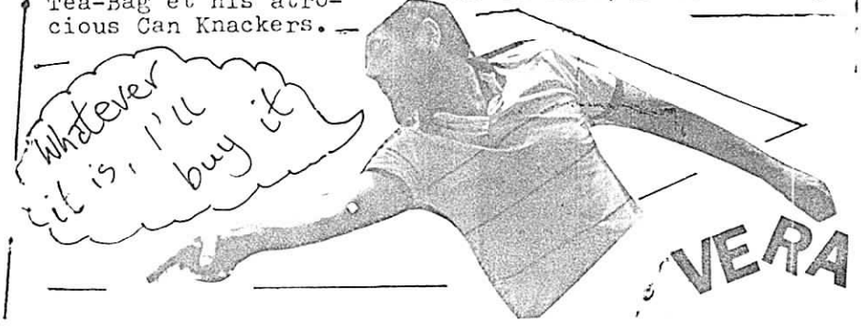
Le French View

UP VOUS

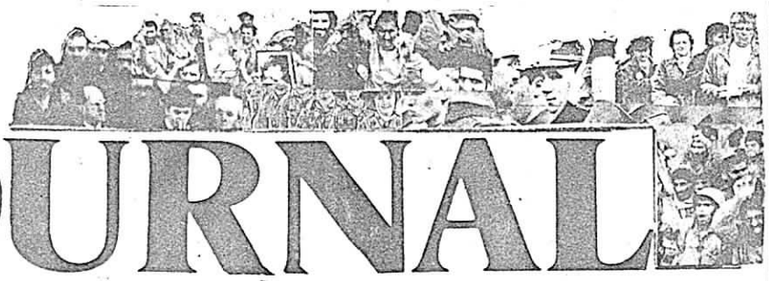
JE is unce more tres over la lune avec le seasonal bonwill to vous all down la where les big uns sont dropping dans appalling megatons de la destruction. Sooner vous than moi, je says. Vous can prendre it from je that je wouldn't be be where vous lot is pas pour tous les Le-arjets dans le private garage of le ghastly Gastric Floppe. Bon on vous et keep sticking les fingers dans les ears because there est un enormous un coming up joli soon pour la celebration of le total downfall of tous les loonies who predicted le collapse of les superb Games at les foul hands of le idiotic black transvestite Jean Mary Tea-Bag et his atrocious Can Knackers.

Par le chemin, je must apologise pour le poisoning of vous lot's team during les Games. Il was un tres cunning plan pour le nobbling of les Pea Energy hordes and le birdbrained Pies Wingnut. Sorry vous got involved avec les essential treatment of les black hordes. Sorry aussi vous didn't get much dans le way of les medailles but at least vous got un free flight dans le sensationel Air Caledonie, le flagship de le Mighty Empire.

Tous le bast, Le Grand Frog.



THE JOURNAL & THE (Last) WORD



POEM

TE MANGAIA KOE

you my swamp
....'n you my mud
you my gentle stream
....in flood
you my secret
....hillside track
you my ra'ei
....bare and black
you my frenzied
fighting shark
you my warm whale
....in the dark
you my tiovi
....quick 'n bright
you my eke
....through the night
you my mynah
....in my ear
you my bush canary
....dear
you my white tern
....flying high
you my tangaeo
....shy
you my juicy tin
....of meat
you my vai akari
....sweet
you my paka
....on my plate
you my soft
....fresh mamio mate
you my pava
you my cave
you my....
makatea grave
you my ocean
you my reef
you my sadness
you my grief
you my inland
you my shore
you my wife
you my whore
you the reason
why i sing
you my life
my everything

RESULTS

WORLD RELIGIOUS SNOOKER CHAMPS:

Inter-Denominational play-offs:

Held at half past vespers in the Working Mullahs Club, Mecca, the opening encounters went as forecast with the Archbishop of Canterbury looking useless and unable to sink his reds.

Local hope, Rev. Metu Fred of South Nikao, winner of the inter-island deacon's pairs, lost in the dying moments of his match against Minheer Fritizie van der Bootie of the Dutch Reformed Church who shot a black in the far corner to finish the contest.

"Ah niver could stind kaffirs watching whin ah plee," was the redoubtable Fritzie's post-match comment.

SPONSORED BY TIME MAGAZINE AND THE US DEFENCE DEPT.

Cory "Cutiepants" Aquino, skipper of the under-rated Manilla Mamas softball team (pictured above in training) expressed no surprise at her squad's recent upset win over the hot shot Marcos Maniacs in a recent S-E Asia League eliminator held on a street corner in Quezon City. "I always reckoned their balls were soft," claimed Cory.

WORLD

iscate the multiple-warheaded spear-gun he had found in the bottom of Cousin Nga's nuclear powered canoe.

ITS A PROMISE

A Takutea Defence Ministry spokesman declared yesterday that, as a contribution to world peace, he would conf-

U.S. DOLLAR

A spokesman for the Takutea Federal Reserve Bank stated this week that he did not believe the dollar would be affected by the turmoil of the share markets in the rest of the world.

The dollar he was referring to is believed to be the only one possessed by the Takutea Reserve Bank, HQ of the local Grouse Shooting fraternity.

RETREAT WELCOMED

Diplomatic sources close to Takutean military aid mission to Afghanistan state that the expected withdrawal of Soviet troops from that country has been welcomed by high officials in the Takutea State Department.

"It is in the interests of Regional stability that the Soviets shove off," said an on-the-spot informant (82), adding, "they drink too much and hog all the women."

NO LOSS OF CONFIDENCE

Mullah Teremoana, head of the militant Shi'it faction of the Takutean Islamic Fundamentalist Committee is organising a Koranic tere party to the Holy City of Omoka next week to see the end of the world, according to Committee Treasurer Tuti Mohammed.

The Mullah forecasts that the world will end sometime during lunch hour next Thursday NOT, as was previously announced, at 3.25 on Friday

CHRISTIAN STOP PRESS

Last night Jehosaphat begat Zebediah.

Both begetting on well.

VERA